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TAGS: [PARM](#) [AORC](#) [CDG](#) [ENRG](#) [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [UNGA](#)
IAEA, NPT, AS
SUBJECT: HIGH MARKS FOR PROPOSAL ON NPT WITHDRAWAL

REF: STATE 002574

Classified By: Pol/Econ Counselor Edgard D. Kagan for reasons 1.4(b)(d)

11. (C/NF) Australia is very enthusiastic about the proposal to dissuade the abuse of the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) withdrawal provision outlined reftel cable. While Australia would like to see the measures go farther in some cases, they would be satisfied even if the NPT Review Conference (RevCon) merely acknowledged the withdrawal provision as a problem. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is currently drafting its own policy paper in advance of the RevCon, which it plans to deliver via demarch prior to the conference. Australia will be a vocal supporter of any proposal to address the NPT's withdrawal provision.

Officials Enthusiastic...

12. (C/NF) Australia has long been concerned about abuse of the NPT's withdrawal provisions and welcomes U.S. leadership on the issue. In 2005, Australia and New Zealand jointly submitted a working paper on this issue, which highlights many of the same problems identified in the reftel non-paper. That paper was not well-received according to Chris King of the Arms Control and Counter-Proliferation Branch at DFAT, but Australia still sees addressing the withdrawal provision as key to the future of the NPT.

13. (C/NF) Australian officials were enthusiastic about the proposals. Jane Hardy, Director of Arms Control and Non-Proliferation for DFAT said that even recognition by the Review Conference that the withdrawal provision was a problem would be a "massive victory." She also heaped praise on the strategic approach the United States is taking to issues. Beginning with a reaffirmation of the withdrawal provision will make the document more palatable to countries who might otherwise oppose it, she believes.

...But Wish the Proposal Went Further

14. (C/NF) Despite support for its broad ideas, Hardy and King both provided some feedback on how they thought the proposal could be improved. They highlighted points where they felt the proposal was too soft. Hardy suggested that even states that withdraw from the NPT should still be subject to procedures to verify they are not conducting any undeclared activity. Hardy also advocated that any notice of withdrawal should trigger a full meeting of the U.N. Security Council, rather than just notification. Australia believes that withdrawal from the NPT should mandate the return of any technology and equipment provided to a country under the terms of the treaty. King recognizes that this last point is likely to be contentious and may need to be abandoned during negotiations, but thought it was important enough that it should be included at least as a starting point.

Australian Policy Paper

¶5. (C/NF) Australia is currently in the process of drafting its own policy paper in advance of the upcoming RevCon. Upon completion of the document it will be cabled out to capitals and delivered as a demarch. Hardy expects that the document will be finalized at some point in February and that it will likely be in line with U.S. policy. She was grateful to have received the reftel demarch, which will be taken into account when finalizing the Australian policy.

Comment

¶6. (C/NF) Non-proliferation is a hot-button issue in Australia. The government is eager to collaborate with the United States on anything related to non-proliferation. As QUnited States on anything related to non-proliferation. As their position on most key issues is very close to that of the United States, Australia can be counted on to be a vocal supporter of any efforts to strengthen the withdrawal provisions at the upcoming conference.

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